

**RB 477: AN ACT CONCERNING A TAX CREDIT FOR MAKING JOBS ACCESSIBLE  
TO EMPLOYEES WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS**

***Written testimony in support of this legislation submitted by Suzanne Letso,  
parent and educational provider submitted March 17, 2010.***

Dear Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding:

As a parent of a son with autism and mental retardation, I am in support of RB 477. My son is now twenty years old and will soon be aging out of his publically funded education program and into adult services. Like most parents, we are very concerned by the lack of viable options available for our children with disabilities in adulthood. Very few of our children are able to obtain and maintain employment regardless of whether they are residents of Connecticut or live in other states. Less than 10% of our children are gainfully employed nationwide. This is a terribly frightening statistic for a parent to contemplate.

As a tax payer, I am also concerned about the future impact the rapid and extraordinary increase in the number of children being diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders will have on our society as these children reach maturity. Statistically, they will probably live as long as the rest of us because their disability does not entail a degenerative component or other medical complications that will typically shorten their lifespan. How will we as a society care for and financially support greater than 1 in 100 of our population who has this very debilitating disorder? This bill has the potential to increase the likelihood that Connecticut businesses will give our citizen's with disabilities a chance to succeed in our workforce, reducing the overall cost of care for taxpayers while enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities, and reducing the cost of doing business in our state overall.

On behalf of my own dear son, and the other people with disabilities that are close to my heart, I thank you for this creative solution to a problem that confounds us all. I hope that this bill moves forward into law to benefit not only our loved ones with autism, but our community as a whole.

Suzanne Letso

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